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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

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Subject: NEW YEAR'S OUTLOOK FOR FAMILY LIVING. Information from family economics specialists of U. S. Department of Agriculture.

On the threshold of a new year we usually try to look into the future, and speculate on what it may hold for us. This year, even with the war touching every American home, plans for the future are booming. Everywhere people are planning for a better life after the war. This planning isn't confined to government officials, or business tycoons-- it's a job for everybody, because it will affect everybody..and because we live in a democracy where every citizen has the right to plan his own future.

We hear a great deal about post-war planning for industry, labor, and agriculture, the three main groups in our national economy. But what about the fundamental group in our society-- the American family? What do American families want after the war?

Well, in one way of speaking, that question has as many answers as there are families in this country. But looking at it in a broader way, American families want pretty much the some basic things for a good life after the war. People from the U. S. Department of Agriculture have been talking over post-war ideas with families in every part of the country. And now the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics has summarized ten basic goals that represent a good standard of life for American families in the post-war world.

These family goals, as the specialists in family economics have listed them, are food... a home... clothing... health... education... recreation... personal care... transportation... communication... and family security from want.

Today, when women talk about food as a post-war goal, they don't mean just getting enough to satisfy hunger. American women are alert to scientific advances in food knowledge, and they want their families to get enough of the right kind of food-- a diet that will furnish the energy, protein, minerals, and vitamins they need for good health. After the war, women should have the opportunity to keep up with new information on food and nutrition. And, to keep family nutritional standards on a good basis, another goal might be a lunch program for all school children, with meals adequately planned and prepared, and served on a non-profit basis.

Here's an important sidelight on the subject of nutrition: the specialists say that when the family produces part of its food at home, it's likely to have a better diet than if it buys all its food. A good plan of food production at home also releases money income for other purchases.

Next after food, on the list of post-war aims for the American family, comes a home. Not just four walls and a roof, but a place that provides comfortable living space for work and play-- the kind of a home that fosters a spirit of family companionship. Another goal high on the list is clothing-- clothing that furnish protection from the weather, and also provide enjoyment to the one who wears it. After the war, industry will probably bring out many new textiles to add to our selection of clothing fabrics.

Of course food, housing, and clothing are three of the most important goals for post-war family living. But the other goals are important, too-- even though they may not be so tangible. For one thing, families are increasingly aware of the importance of good health, and a desirable goal for the family is access to the progress that's being made in medicine and dentistry, at a cost the family can afford. And this doesn't mean curative medicine only-- it also means preventive medicine....popular instruction in health... maternity and child hygiene.... supervision of health in the schools... and sanitation and control of diseases.

Education is another vital goal for the post-war period-- education for both adults and children. It's essential if the present and the coming generations are to take an intelligent part in community and national affairs.

To round out the activities of daily living, another post-war aim for all American families will be a varied program of recreation, including libraries, playgrounds and parks, reading matter and phonograph records, meeting places for community activities, and of course radio and recreational facilities within the home.

Adequate facilities for personal care constitute another goal for good family living after the war. Many families now don't have the means for cleanliness and good grooming, and this can greatly influence the position of a family in the life of the community.

The need for transportation and communication varies according to where the family lives -- in a city, town, or on a farm-- but whatever the needs may be, adequate transportation and communication will be important to both work and recreation after the war.

Finally, on the list of family goals, comes the keystone on which all the other goals rest: economic security. This is the biggest factor in the post-war picture-- it's the point where the problem of each family becomes the problem of all. Achieving security from want means cooperation in an intelligent and far-sighted way, among all American families, whether they belong to industry, labor, or agriculture.

You may be asking yourself what you can do, in a tangible way, to bring about better living for your family after the war. Families everywhere are already taking steps in this direction: some are earmarking wartime savings for definite post-war improvements in their living standards. Some are learning about group medical care, social security plans, and other matters that they will want to participate in when the time comes for practical action. These families know that now is the time to begin, in order to make the family goals become reality after the war.

